simple actions of animals and men, the many attempts at mechanical or physico-chemical explanation have hitherto failed to achieve success. That does not show that they must always fail in the future. But we must be guided by the empirical facts as we find them, rather than by metaphysical prejudices.

It is necessary to clear up also a verbal confusion now current. So long as the old atomic mechanical materialism was in favour, the meaning of the terms * mechanical explanation' and * mechanical causation * was fairly definite. As soon as the strictly mechanical theory of universal kinetic mechanisms was generally abandoned, a new word was needed to denote all the non-teleological forms of explanation and causation; and the word * mechanistic' has come into pretty general usage for this purpose in England and America. But some authors, influenced perhaps by the lack of equally distinctive verbal equivalents in other languages, especially the German, use the word [4] mechanistic' to denote the strictly mechanical. Some restrict its meaning even more narrowly, reserving it for the designation of movements such as those of the typical machine consisting of rigid parts, wheels, cranks, eccentrics, levers, joined together in such fashion that the movement of each part is strictly constrained by all the rest to a single path, which it traverses again and again without the possibility of deviation or variation. Having thus very narrowly defined the term [£] mechanistic \ they then repudiate that designation for any theory or explanation of

biological
events which is not of this strictly mechanical
or machine
type. This is, I think, an unfortunate usage
of language,
oae which makes for confusion. It destroys
the clear-cut
traditional dichotomy of all events into the
two classes,